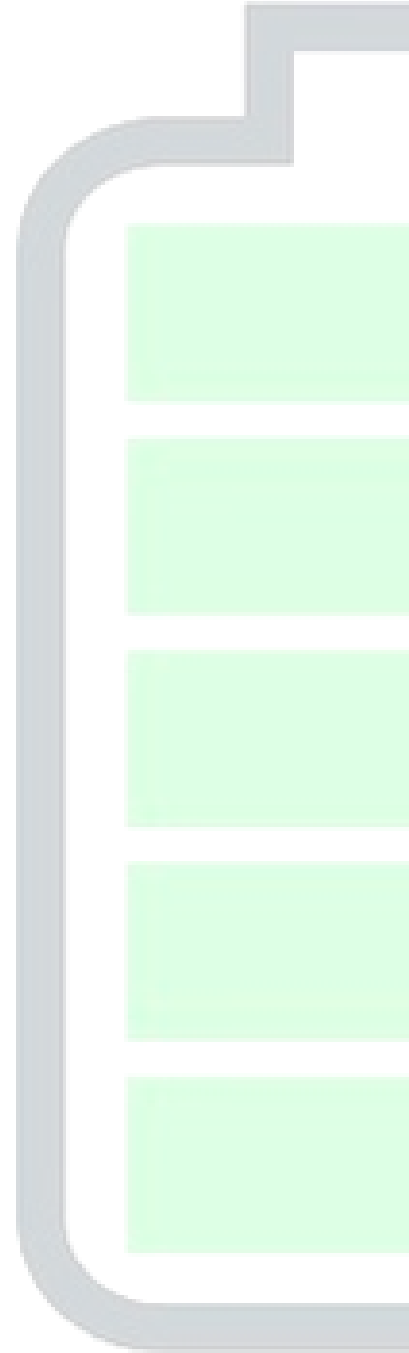


BGS 2021 Working group

Assessment of BGS
Executive summary



December 2014



Members of the BGS 2021 Working group

Alain De Clercq

Bruno Olislaeger

Dominique Delrez

Enrico Gianotti

Jan Briffaerts

Jean-Guillaume Demailly

Jérôme Jaumotte

Laurent Colin

Louis Chaidron

Martin Cambier

Philip Turner

Szandra Gonzalez

Susana Perez Diaz

Thierry Van Eyll

Vincent Reillon

Brussels Gay Sport - December 2014

info@bgs.org

www.bgs.org

Executive Summary

The assessment conducted by the BGS 2021 working group concludes that the current situation of the BGS is overall positive, but it stresses the need to develop a long-term vision to ensure the continued existence of the association.

It appears first that the current members and former members have a very good image of the BGS and are in large part very satisfied. People outside the association also have a positive image of the BGS. The continued growth of the association in terms of activities and number of members to reach 727 members in August 2014 reflects this positive image.

Then it is clear that the friendly framework offered by the BGS to perform various activities is very important for the members. Furthermore, the survey revealed that this framework is conducive to the social development of members, confirming that the BGS partially filled its mission.

Despite these strengths, the survey also reveals the weaknesses of the association. The most worrying issue is the lack of associative culture within the BGS, particularly among the new members. The BGS as an association only works because the members are involved and volunteer to perform various tasks. The withdrawal of former volunteers and non-renewal of these forces by new active members threaten the existence of the association on the medium-term.

To meet this challenge, the survey reveals that there is a pool of members willing to take part in the association that is not stimulated enough. The lack of understanding of the status of effective member illustrates this situation. Better communication towards members on the needs and ways to engage in the association is required to help stimulate and harvest all the potential lifeblood of the BGS.

In conclusion, the survey highlights the strengths of the BGS: dynamism, attractiveness, positive image, success in its mission. But it also reveals the challenges that must be addressed quickly to maintain the good health of the association in the years to come: an improved communication to members on the responsibilities they can take within the association, the reaffirmation of the importance of engaging, and a greater flexibility in the organization of the structure to allow for smoother operation.

The image of the BGS

Of course, the BGS organizes sports and recreational activities and this is very noticeable. However, this is only a means for the BGS to achieve its goal: to promote the development and social integration of LGBTQI people. However, this goal comes only in third position of the survey responses out of the four possible goals mentioned. The results of the survey show that one must be careful about the message on the mission of the BGS in order not to reduce it to a practical version - the organization of activities - but properly present the purpose of these activities: the development and socialization of LGBTQI people.

The BGS is considered very visible in the population it targets: Brussels LGBTQI community. This feeling of a good visibility of BGS is observed among current members, former members or outsiders.

The results also show that the perception of the BGS as an association opened to everybody is not strongly rooted among current members. Similarly, the perception of people outside the BGS is still, for half of them, that of a community association.

Knowledge of BGS and interest in the association

The survey data show how word of mouth is the most used way to get in contact with the BGS. Knowledge of BGS is mainly conveyed by the members who become the primary means of promoting the association. The website is an important tool to get to know the BGS, especially for non-Belgian members. The investment in a new website for the BGS online since June appears fully justified.

The vast majority of members join the BGS in the first place because they are interested in practicing activities. However, it is important to note that it is not only the activities that count. The framework proposed by the BGS is also essential. This is what differentiates the BGS from other structures that offer the same activities. Finding a good atmosphere and the opportunity to meet new people count a lot in the process of joining the association. The results also highlight the success of the BGS to fulfil its mission.

The answers of former members about their reason for leaving the BGS do not show key issues. However, these results point out the need to be attentive when welcoming new members. It is also necessary to highlight the fact that to practice no activity does not prevent one to remain a member and support the association.

Involvement and role of members

The data collected on the involvement and role of members highlight a lack of transmission of the associative culture to new members. As an association, the BGS works only because its members are involved in the organization of activities. It seems that some work needs to be done to reinforce this message and ensure a good renewal of volunteers.

With respect to this, the results of the survey are encouraging. It appears clearly that there is a pool of volunteers willing to engage within the association. However, the analysis of the results also highlights an asymmetry between the interest of the members to get involved in the association and their perception of the opportunities to do so. Members who feel very involved are also very interested. However, interested members are not those who say they are the most involved. There is therefore a potential of motivation and a willingness to get involved which are not fully reflected in terms of concrete involvement in the BGS.

This analysis is also very evident on the status of effective member. Respondents wishing to become effective members have profiles at least as committed, if not more, than the self-reported effective members. An overwhelming majority of them are already volunteering for the association. It seems that these members do not have the information to be able to fulfil their commitment. Better communication on the effective member status and how to become one is necessary.

Furthermore, it appears that volunteering for the association is the best way to get in touch with members of other activities. Promoting the involvement of members and volunteers in the association is also an effective way to carry out the mission of the association.

International

Members are not aware of the involvement of BGS in international structures. It is necessary to reinforce this point. Despite this, the organization of a major international event like the Eurogames appears as a catalyst capable of harvesting the enthusiasm of the members and encouraging their involvement as volunteers.

The activities of the BGS

The satisfaction rate on the organization of activities is very high. Participation in tournaments and meetings can be a problem for some members. There is a huge demand on existing activities that the BGS must learn to manage. Many other activities are of interest to our members, as possibilities to reduce the pressure on existing activities.

For most unifying activities, members are enthusiastic. However, many open comments suggest improvements to make the unifying activities even more attractive. It also appears that 60% of members support the organization of further unifying activities.

Communication at BGS

It appears from the survey results that the diversity of communication media used allow to be in contact with the members effectively. The respondents also welcomed the good use of the three languages of BGS and appreciate the efforts being made in this direction.

Recommending BGS

The recommendation rate of members and former members are very high. It is clear that members of the BGS are overall very satisfied by being part of the association and will not hesitate to recommend it.

Assessment of the current situation - SWOT Analysis of BGS

From the results of the survey and exchanges, members of the BGS 2021 working group drew up the following analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of BGS and the opportunities and threats that the organization currently faces. This matrix provides an assessment of the association in December 2014.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 750 members in Brussels • Very good internal image • Good external image • Anchoring in sports and leisure activities conveying positive values • Good financial situation • Usable proper founds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of associative culture among new members • Lack of ownership of BGS • Recognition in the activities and not in the association • Structural rigidity, lack of flexibility and initiatives • Rate of effective members down • Difficult renewal of volunteers • Lack of communication on the functioning of BGS and ways to get involved • Focus on 30-45 years-old, lack of diversity
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High number of members who are motivated and who wish to engage • Visibility to politicians to build • Networks and contacts to develop further, particularly internationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a consumer logic, far from the associative logic • Lack of vision for the future, and lack of long-term goals • Potential separation of certain activities, split of the structure • Forgetting the first mission of the association • Special interests prevailing over the general interest • Lack of collegiality in decision making • Aging and fatigue of active members